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Volume 50, No. 11 ISSUE 598 **MARCH 2002** **www.orthodoxherald.homestead.com**

KEPT RIGHT

The Great Fast has no advantage to us unless it brings about our spiritual renewal. It is necessary while fasting to change our whole life and practice virtue.

Turning away from all wickedness means keeping our tongue in check, restraining our anger, avoiding all gossip, lying and swearing. To abstain from these things – herein is the true value of the fast.

It is folly to abstain all day long from food, but fail to abstain from sin and selfishness.

It is possible for one who fasts not to be rewarded for his fasting. How? When indeed we abstain from foods, but do not abstain from iniquities; when we do not eat meat, but gnaw to pieces the homes of the poor; when we do not become drunkards with wine, but we become drunkards with evil pleasures; when we abstain all the day, but all the night we spend unchastened shows. Then what is the benefit of abstention from foods, when on the one hand you deprive your body of a selected food, but on the other offer yourself unlawful food?

–St. John Chrysostom

ALL-PURPOSE PRAYER FOR LENT

Create in me a clean heart, O God and renew a steadfast spirit within me. Psalm 51:10

This single line from the Psalms is a wonderful prayer for Lent.

A clean heart: the recognition that we have been soiled in our inmost being by giving in to evil is the beginning of repentance. Far from being a symptom of a bad self-image, this recognition is the beginning of health.

Create in me, O God: By acknowledging both that we cannot reform ourselves and that God can, we take another step

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PRAYER OF ST. EPHREM THE SYRIAN

Lord and Master of my life, give me not a spirit of sloth, vain curiosity, lust for power, and idle talk.

But give to me your servant a spirit of prudence, humility, patience and love.

Lord and King, grant me to see my own faults and not to condemn my brother; for You are blessed to the ages of ages. Amen.

This 4th century Lenten prayer is the simplest and purest expression of repentance in all its dimensions – the desire for purification, improvement and real change. It is meant to be repeated with "metanoies" or prostrations after each verse so that we may physically participate in the effort of "breaking down" our pride and self-satisfaction. Let this prayer help you each day of your Lenten journey.

A FASTING DISCIPLINE

All Orthodox Christians should fast. But each person and each family must prayerfully choose and commit themselves to a fasting discipline that is suitable to their circumstances and **that they can keep.** Some choose to fast strictly (no meat or dairy products) throughout Lent. Many choose to fast strictly only during the first week of Lent and during Holy Week. Others choose to fast from meat throughout Lent but some from meat, fish, and dairy products only on Wednesdays and Fridays. Still others follow other forms of fasting disciplines. Children usually fast with moderation and care in order to receive the necessary nutrients for their growing bodies. As far as ideas for Lenten foods, a number of cookbooks are now available providing many suggestions for a balanced and healthy diet.

These books are helpful guidelines. But they are not meant to undo the whole spirit of fasting by causing us

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THE TEN STEPS

At the beginning of the Lenten Cycle, Orthodox people finish their greetings to each other with the words: "May we live to greet the Holy Resurrection."

To achieve this glorious goal, the church has specified certain prayers and conduct. In studying the readings for the Sundays and the synax of the day, we saw a definite pattern of 10 steps. Last month we discussed the first two.

1. Set out on new path (Zaccheus Sunday)

2. Need for self-evaluation (Publican and Pharisee)

This month we will be led through the next five. The readings for March 3 are 1 Cor. 6:12-20 and Luke 15:11-32. The kondak for this Sunday identifies this Step. We realize that we are sinners and we are sorry. "I have recklessly forgotten Thy Glory, O Father; and I have scattered the riches which Thou has given me. Now I cry to Thee as the Prodigal; I have sinned before Thee, O merciful Father, receive me as a penitent and make me as one of your hired servants."

On March 10 we read from 1 Cor. 8:8-13 and Matthew 25:31-46. Last month, we learned of the love of the Father toward His children. Today, we are warned about the Last judgment. At every Divine Liturgy we pray the litany: "A Christian ending our life: painless, blameless, and peaceful; and a good defense before the dread judgment seat of Christ. Let us pray to the Lord." This step could be called: Fear of the judgment of Christ.

On March 17 we read from Romans 13:11-14:4 and Matthew 6:14-21. This Sunday is called either Cheesefast or Forgiveness Sunday. The gospel for the day sets the name for this step: Ask for forgiveness of those you have offended. It is customary on this day at vespers to ask and accord mutual reconciliation. As Jesus said: "For if you forgive men

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CHRONOLOGY

MARCH 2002

DIED: Fr. Luke Hill (retired) in Oxnard, CA

Matushka Josephine Kasatkin (widow) in Passaic, NJ. Mother of Fr. John Kasatkin.

This March issue was mailed on February 16.

THERE ARE NOW 200 OCF's on College and University Campuses throughout North America. For more information on an OCF/Orthodox Christian Fellowship, call 510/704-8910 or e-mail: info@ocf.net.

COLLEGE STUDENTS AND OTHERS are invited to attend services at Christ Our Saviour Church, a newly-organized parish which has purchased 9 1/2 acres and will soon break ground near the university in Indiana, PA.

THE MUSEUM OF ROMANIAN DIASPORA has been allocated space in a 12th c. fortress in Fagaras, near Brasov, Romania. The purpose of the museum is to preserve Romanian cultural memory. Students are being sought to do oral histories in America of immigrants, their families and community personalities. Materials for the museum are also being sought. Contact: David Kideckel at 860/832-2611 or e-mail Kideckel@ccsu.edu.

THE ORTHODOX WORD, Nos. 218-219, 2001, published by St. Herman Press, Begum Gorge Rd., Platina, CA 96076, was partially devoted to the situation of Orthodox Christians in Kosova, Serbia, etc. It gives a clear picture of life there at the present time and discusses how the American policy affected it and the tragedy of September 11. Please pray for six women who are confined to a church yard except when they can leave escorted by KFOR. The women of Djakovica are: Ljubica, Jelena, Dragica, Poleksija, Vasilika and Nada. They won't leave for fear, the church will be added to the over 160 already destroyed since the UN troops have arrived. Send $6 for copy.

ICONS WERE SAVED IN MANY WAYS. At the end of WW I, the Archimandrite of a monastery on Solovetsky gave three icons (2 depicting the founders of the monastery) to a British chaplain from Archangelsk for safekeeping. His descendents have traveled in July to the recently reopened monastery to formally return the icons to their rightful home.

A LARGE VILLA IN THE CENTER OF OSLO, NORWAY has been purchased by the St. Nicholas Parish (the oldest Orthodox parish in Norway) to be rebuilt as a typical church. The parish has been worshipping in the undercroft of a Lutheran church.

A DOCTOR OF MINISTRY is being offered by Antiochian Orthodox House of Studies and Pittsburgh Theological Seminary. Distance study with 3 weeks a year residence. Phone 412/441-3304 Ext. 2112. Web: www.pts.edu.

CAMP VATRA Romaneasca has set the dates for Camp for Juniors on July 14-20 and Camp for Seniors on July 28-August 10. The camp is located at Grass Lake, Michigan. Info 313/562-1521.

THE 13TH ANNUAL RETREAT of the Orthodox Christian Mission Center (OCMC) will be held on March 8-10 at Switzerland, Florida. For info call: Andy Lekos at 904/829-5132 or e-mail ajlekos@ocmc.com.

HOLY TRINITY CENTER FOR ORTHODOX STUDIES with Fr. Dcn Joseph Kreta will begin with a K-12 Orthodox Christian School this August in South Bound Brook, NJ. For info: 610/782-0203.

THE WORK OF FR. ALEXANDER MEN continues. A church dedicated to his patron, St. Alexander Nevsky, was recently consecrated in Novaya Derevnya, Russia, where he served as a parish priest. He was murdered on his way to church on Sept. 9, 1990. He emphasized religious education. Besides the church, an educational building has been built and furnished. The parish is involved in social work and publishing. Many have been brought to Christ. His books are available in English from Oakwood Publications, 3827 Bluff St., Torrance, CA 90505-6359 or call 800/747-9245.

RILA, THE LARGEST MONASTERY IN BULGARIA, has been plundered. Over 11,000 priceless objects have disappeared since 1973. The government has set up a committee to look into returning the lands of the monastery, which were also taken and made into the Rila National Park.

THE DEPARTMENT OF RELIGIOUS EDUCATION of the Greek Archdiocese has published its 4th Annual "The Dogma and Theology of the Orthodox Church." Consisting of 36 articles and essays, it joins Vol. 1 "The Liturgical Year," Vol. 2 "Holy Tradition" and Vol. 3 "The Holy Fathers." Each volume is $5 (plus postage) and can be ordered from DRE at 800/566-1088.

THE NEW JERSEY DEANERY CHOIR, under the direction of Aleksei Shipovalnikov, has released its first CD "Spirit of Orthodoxy." Order from web at http://njdeanerychoir.com, where you can hear several selections, or call Mr. Shipovalnikov at 201/985-9516.

BEFORE YOU GO TO THE DOCTOR, write down your symptoms, concerns and any questions you might have. It is too easy to forget once you are in the office.

BELLS IN THE ORTHODOX CHURCH are cast to specific perfect tone. The largest is G sharp. The others range from D, A sharp, G, E and D. There are certain patterns used in ringing the bells.

GUIDE TO THE AMERIKANSKY RUSSKY VIESTNIK (1915-1929) by Robert Katlowich is available for $24.50 from C-RRC, 7380 SW 86 Lane, Ocala, FL 344-76-7006. Of special interest to those interested in genealogy and in history of specific Russky American communities.

Continued from front page)

ALL-PURPOSE PRAYER FOR LENT

toward wholeness.

Renew within me: Christians repent because they have already received a gift of faith and the life it brings in baptism. When we sin, we need to be renewed in the original blessing of our faith.

A steadfast spirit: We are not looking for a monetary rush of emotion, immediate gratification or a seasonal change, but for the ability to live each day in faith, hope and love. Try to pray this prayer each day of Lent, and pray it with confidence that God actually will accomplish this in you and in all the parishioners.

Continued from front page)

THE TEN STEPS

their trespasses, your heavenly Father will also forgive you."

On March 24 we read from Hebrews 11:24-26, 32-12:2 and John 1:43-51. This is the first Sunday of Great Lent. The Epistle Reading sets the theme for this Sunday. Heroes of the Old Testament are enumerated. At Vespers we hear of the heroes of the Early Church, those who fought the heresies often at great personal sacrifice. Heresies are complete rejection or denial of a revealed truth by one who has already confessed the Orthodox faith. They occurred within the church and worked to destroy her. Iconoclasm was one of the heresies. In the eighth century it taught that the veneration of icons is unlawful. This step reminds us to be vigilant about teachings other than those taught by the church.

On March 31 we read from Hebrews 1:10-2:3 and Mark 2:1-12. We can say this Seventh Step is get moving. The Kondak reminds us so clearly: "Now is the time for action! Judgment is at the doors! Let us rise and fast, offering alms with tears of compunction (remorse) and crying: We have sinned more than the sands of the sea; but forgive us, O Master of All, so that we may receive the incorruptible crowns."

We will continue with the steps for the Sundays of April next month.

* * * * * *

To avoid criticism – do nothing.

Continued from front page)

A FASTING DISCIPLINE

to be constantly preoccupied with "delicious Lenten meals!" Fasting entails not only the **quality** of foods but also the **quantity** of consumptions. The key words should be moderation and simplicity of meals.

LIGHTER MOMENT

"We've got to economize," said Krayan Ivanich to his wife.

"Very well," replied the good woman, cheerfully, "you shave yourself and I'll cut your hair.

ETHNIC CHUCKLE

Dorohaya Tyota Maria,

I guess zhe te dumala zhe ya leaveovala svit yak ya nye pisala sooner. Ale ya bula taka busy na holidays, e ya mala mali mishap zhe ya neznala chi ya coming or going.

Tam tyi Thursday noon, ya bula babysitting. Everything ishlo O.K., yak ya noticesovala zhe baby chokuyhe. Ya dostala so excited, ya grabnula babyu, e turnovala kid upside down, e trepem, e trepem, a ona estche chokuyhe.

Ya dala yey egg z mlikom, a ona yestche kickovala. Potom ona dostala quiet. Ya zvedala yey; "Chto te swallowvala?" Ona kaze: "Soap." Ale ya tnikuyem ked be bulo soap ti ne be chokovala so long.

Potom ya noticeovala zhe safety pin missuye od stola. Ya dostala scared e pytam zash: "Chto ty swallowvala?" Ona kazhe - "soapy pin."

Ya thinkovala shto ya scrazuyu. Ya dumala dati ye dirty dish water. Ya grabuvala yey nohe, holduyem yey ruky. E then ya nemala druhu ruku trimati yeynos. Ya sobrala babu e putovala yey na table e ya leanovala na kid e spillovala dish vodu do yey mouth e ona stala makeovati mali bubelsi.

Ya po callovala doctora, on powil me shto ya mam brati kid do hospitalya na X-rayse. X-rays buli O.K., e ya vzala babyu domyu. Ya bula taka happy zhe nich ne yest wrong, i na drugu hand taka mad zhe ona scareovala mene.

Ya learnovala taki lesson zhe never zabudem. Ya nikole budyu watchovati kidsy anymore. Moye babysitting days pishle het.

Budte zdorovy,
Hanya.

NOTES ON OUR 50TH

(The Herald) is the most important mail to come to me. I just wish everyone that is Orthodox could have access to it. We would have a stronger church and more people would have stayed in the church. I'd be lost if I didn't receive it all these years.

Olga Kovalenko

We enjoy every copy so much and look forward to receiving each new issue. I keep them in loose-leaf notebooks and oftentimes go back and read them again. We never tire doing so because there is always something more to enjoy and meditate on. Many thanks to you and Matushka Nina for all the understanding, with your teachings, brought to us of our rich Orthodox heritage.

Alexandria Bosko

George Yura has been with us for 50 years. The first year of publication we had 600 subscribers. We now have 7500. Our resubscription rate is very high, if only we could reach more new subscribers. Help us!

BIBLE QUIZ

1. Which disciple was probably born a twin?
2. Who died giving birth to Benjamen?
3. Was the prodigal son the younger or older son?
4. Who was older, Moses or Aaron?
5. Who was Jacob's youngest son?
6. Who was born first, Jacob or Esau?
7. What prophet spoke of a time of peace when a little child would lead the wild beasts?

ANSWERS:
1. Thomas (John 11:16)
2. Rachel (Genesis 35:16-18)
3. The younger (Luke 15:11-31)
4. Aaron (Exodus 7:7)
5. Benjamin (Genesis 35:16-18)
6. Esau (Genesis 25:25-26)
7. Isaiah (11:6)

* * * * * *

DON'T REHEARSE

The person who keeps rehearsing the resentments of the past can never deal as he should with the challenges of the present. If you hold bitterness in your heart for past injustices, you will never be able to do your present and future tasks as well as you should.

ONE OF THREE

St. Gregory Palamas was one of three people who have been singly honored with a Sunday. The others are St. John of the Ladder and Mary of Egypt.

Who was he? And why was he to be remembered on the Second Sunday of each Great Lent? During a recent informal survey, we found that knowledge about him was almost zero except that he had something to do with Light.

This is understandable because neither the Gospel nor Epistle Readings for the 2nd Sunday have anything to do with St. Gregory or his work. The reason for this is that his commemoration was placed on this Sunday in the 14th century long after the lectionary was made. However, those who attend vespers or matins would hear many prayers concerning him. These were written by Patriarch Philotheus on the occasion of the recognition of St. Gregory as a saint in1368 with the designated day of remembrance as November 14. So he is commemorated on two days.

St. Gregory Palamas was born in Constantinople around 1296 and was brought up from infancy in the royal palace where he received both an excellent religious and secular education. When he reached his majority, he left for Mount Athos, where he became a monk. He was an exponent of an ascetical theory that caused great controversy in the church. This became known as hesychasism.

By 1333, the battle with Barlaam, a Greek monk from southern Italy, received much attention. They differed in their approach to the Divine Light. Gregory attended two councils in Constantinople, one in 1341, the second in 1347, where the argument was aired. Although the monks of Mount Athos stood firmly behind his views, he was excommunicated for his writings and views.

The excommunication was lifted in 1347 and he was appointed Archbishop of Thessalonika. The Hesychast controversy was alive all these years. As it was more closely studied, it was declared orthodox by the Church in Constantinople in 1351. However, by this time, St. Gregory was worn out by fighting for his views. His health was seriously impaired and he died at age 63, after serving as archbishop for 13 years. His relics remain in Thessalonika.

In recent years, there has been much interest and study in Hesychasism. St. Gregory taught that fasting and prayer and especially the practice of the Jesus Prayer prepares one to receive the grace-filled Light of the Lord, which is like that which shone on Mt. Tabor at the Transfiguration. The tropar for this day explains it so beautifully: "...revealing ... Thy glory in so far as they were able to bear it. Let Thy Light everlasting illumine us sinners also..."

In the matins on the Second Sunday of Lent, one text brings together three points on St. Gregory's thoughts: Christ illumines sinners, lenten abstinence and discussion on the word "arise" from the gospel for the day (Mark 2:1-12). The prayer reads: "To those who live in the darkness of sin, Thou that brought Light, O Christ, at this time of abstinence. Show us the glorious day of Passion, so that we may cry to Thee: Arise God and have pity on us."

He taught with his mind and his heart unlike Barlaam who only used academic thought. May he be an example for us so that with him we may have the motto: I believe that I may understand not I understand that I may believe.

TOGETHER

The teachings we are given on Meatfast Sunday (March 10) and on St. Theodore Saturday, which is the first Saturday of Great Lent (March 23), give us practical advice about problems which may confront us concerning our fasting during Great Lent.

First, on the reading from Meatfast (1 Corinthians 8:8-9:2), St. Paul knew that idol feasts were held in the temples in Corinth. The portion of the animal not offered on the altar as a sacrifice was distributed to the priests of the temple and a part was given to the person who made the offering and part might be sold in the marketplace.

The people who made the offering were accustomed to inviting their friends to share in the feast with them which was held at the temple at the conclusion of the services. The Christians of Corinth were sometimes invited to the feast and they attended for various reasons. Some went because they didn't want to offend a neighbor or relative who had invited them, others because they couldn't see the harm in it. They knew that the idol was not a god and they looked upon the feast as a social dinner and not an act of religion. This situation may be one we can relate with today.

Why did St. Paul complain? He protested against the Christians attending these dinners because he felt that many Christians, not as well informed, might misinterpret their reason for attending. They might assume that the Christians who were attending were also venerating the idol. He says that to eat or not to eat meat of the sacrifice is not of importance here, the problem is the example that is set.

This teaches us that we ought to avoid even innocent and indifferent practices which might grieve others and perhaps lead them away from the right path. It is important for us to ask ourselves: "What would other people think?"

St. Theodore and the eating of only wheat and honey shows how seriously the early Christians took fasting and abstinence.

In the year 362, Julian the Apostate sat on the imperial throne. He had been a Christian in his youth and knew the rules governing Christians. Upon becoming emperor, he not only turned his back on Christianity, he began to persecute Christians. He knew that they fasted during Lent and especially during the first week, as they were preparing to take Holy Communion. Julian ordered blood from the sacrificed animals to be sprinkled on the food in the marketplace, which "defiled" it for the Christians.

St. Theodore was informed about this. He warned the Christians not to eat food from the marketplace. What were they to eat? Inspired by God, he advised boiling wheat and eating it all week as they did in Emessia in Asia Minor, where he had grown up. They did so and in remembrance of this the Church set this first Saturday as the day to bless and give Kutia or koliivya to eat.

May these serve as examples for us.

HELP NEEDED

The people of the village of Udol (formerly Ujak), Slovakia, near Stara Lubovna, northwest of Presov, are seeking monetary assistance to build a new Orthodox Church, dedicated to St. Dimitry of Solonika. The old Church was formerly shared by the Greek Catholics and the Orthodox for Divine Services. However, the Great Catholics through the Pope of Rome have laid exclusive claim to the old church and the Orthodox have been forbidden to use the premises. This has necessitated the building of a new church which is now being constructed on land donated by Stephan Scerbak, Professor at the Orthodox Seminary in Presov, and his mother Helena, relatives of Matushka Julia Romanchak of Bethlehem, and Emergy Knapp of Horseheads, New York, whose parents immigrated to the United States from this small village after World War I. Udol was also the birthplace of the late V. Rev. Michael Chanda.

The priest assigned to the new parish to oversee the construction is the Rev. Mikulas Lakata, who lives in Presov with his Pani. Through the benevolence of Helena Scerbak, Divine Services are presently being conducted at her home, which has been donated to the Orthodox Church along with the surrounding acreage of land. The foundation of a new church has been laid and the walls partially constructed and a beautiful bell purchased. Much work remains. Therefore, any monetary assistance would be greatly appreciated and can be forwarded to either The Most Reverend Herman, PO Box 130, So. Canaan, PA 18459 or to your local priest, who in turn will forward it to His Eminence. Archbishop Herman will then turn over all contributions to the His Grace, Bishop Nicholas of the Orthodox Diocese in Presov, Slovakia.

Any gift, great or small, would be graciously accepted by the poor deprived people of Udol, who are so piously and determinedly dedicating their utmost efforts to the construction of this house of worship to the glory to God. They estimate that the cost of the exterior of the church will approximate $50,000 American dollars. God bless all contributors for their merciful generosity.

SHAPKI (HATS)

The headdress of the ancients (according to Archpriest Sokoloff in A Manual of the Orthodox Church's Divine Services was a long strip of linen cloth, which was wrapped around the head and called "head-band" or "fillet." According to the position and wealth of the wearer, this head-gear differed in material and shape. We have become aware of this type of headwear since the war in Afghanistan.

At first, only the Patriarchs adopted it during divine services; but in time it became a part of the sacred vestments of all bishops. At the present time, some of the clergy are given the right to wear a head-dress during certain times of the services. The headwear differs according to the rank of the clergyman.

The bishops wear a mitre. It is an embroidered crown which is usually jeweled and has icons depicting the four evangelists. Bishops began wearing mitres called shapkas in Russian during the Byzantine period (5th to 15th centuries). Wearing the mitre during the Divine Services, the bishop symbolizes Christ the King. It is a symbol of authority and as such is also given to certain abbots, archimandrites and priests to wear. When the mitre is given to the bishop by the deacon for the first time during a divine service, a prayer very similar to the tropar at the crowning during a wedding is proclaimed: "Place, O Lord on thy head a crown of precious stones. He asked for life and You gave him many days now and ever and unto ages of ages. Amen."

Priests may be given two different types of headwear. These are called a kamilavka, which means either "something made out of camel's hair" or "something that protects against the heat" of the sun. The other headwear is called a skufia, which means something resembling a "cup or a skull." Both of these are awarded for distinguished service.

The kamilafka was first worn to protect from the sun and to remind the wearer of the words of St. Paul in Galatians 6:11 14: "whom the world has crucified to me and I to the world."

The skufia has been given as an award since the time of Emperor Paul I on December 18, 1797.

There is a prescribed rule as to when these are worn and when they are removed during a Divine Service. The rule (rubrics) differs.

KNEELING AND STANDING

The traditional posture for prayer and worship in an Orthodox Church has been to stand. In the Orthodox "Old Countries," there are usually no pews in the churches. Chairs or benches on the side walls are usually reserved for the elderly and infirm. In North America, we have tended to build our churches with pews; and since we have them, we need to figure out when we may sit and when we should stand.

First of all, it is fully acceptable (even preferable) to stand for the entire service. If you prefer this, it would be better to find a place closer to the back or side of the church so as not to stand out or block someone's view. When should you definitely stand? Always during the Gospel reading, the Little and Great Entrances, the Anaphora, the distribution of Holy Communion, whenever the priest gives a blessing, (when the deacon or priest censes), and the Dismissal.

In many parishes, the Divine Liturgy books in the pews have suggested times when sitting is acceptable. Follow these instructions. When in doubt, stand. It is never wrong to stand in church.

Many parishes also follow the practice of kneeling on Sundays during the Cherubim Hymn, consecration, and the "Our Father." Strictly speaking, this is not correct, because every Sunday is a "little Pascha" in which the Resurrection is remembered – hence, no kneeling. The "kneeling prayers" said five weeks after Pascha are said after the Sunday Liturgy, "reinstating" kneeling for Vespers, Matins, and weekday Liturgies only. If the tradition of the parish you are visiting is to kneel, and everyone kneels, it's better to do so than to stick out like a sore thumb. If there is a mixture of standing and kneeling, then stand.

Borrowed.

* * * * * *

The devil is willing for a person to confess Christianity as long as he does not practice it.

WINTER'S SILENCE

Be still, and know that I *am* God.
Psalm 46:10

Winter in Ohio is typically cold and dreary. There's snow to shovel, icy roads to maneuver, and bone-chilling temperatures. For many, it's a relief to be indoors and out of the elements. These are the people who have a great appreciation for the other seasons and eagerly await the coming of spring.

But, there's another side of winter, too. One can enjoy a wide variety of winter sports and can spend more time in the company of family and friends during the long evenings. As for me, I find comfort in winter's simple beauty and silence.

This is my time to go spiritually within and listen as God speaks through the world around me – the stark contrast of bare tree branches against the afternoon sky, the vibrant color of the cardinal, or the silence and beauty of newly-fallen snow.

A birdfeeder stands outside my window. It is a flurry of activity at different times of the day. Through observation, I've learned when certain birds arrive, their eating habits, and other characteristics. If I had unlimited time, I could watch for hours. My favorites are the chickadees. Unlike the other birds that hungrily gobble and scatter seeds and push other birds out of the way, the chickadees wait on the branches of a nearby tree. When no other birds are around, they take one sunflower seed at a time. They come back again and again – each time taking only one seed. The actions of these tiny black and white creatures speak to me clearly – polite, patient, and persistent.

When the seed runs low, I go out to fill the feeder. While the other birds fly away in terror at my presence, the chickadees continue to patiently wait on the tree branch a few feet away as I finish my chore. There seems to be no fear, only trust, on their part. They once again speak to me through the silence of this late afternoon.

There was another winter that I now recall with gratitude. With unseasonably warm weather, my parsley thrived and phlox bloomed late into the season. When I was in despair, the hardy, green herb and delicate, white flowers became daily reminders of hope.

Great Lent affords us many opportunities to be silent and go within to seek God's direction for our lives. Freeing ourselves from outside distractions, we can spend time in meditation and prayer. Attending Lenten services, such as Presanctified Liturgy, and spending time in spiritual reading makes us more open and receptive to His guidance.

God speaks to us in many ways – all we need to do is be still and listen.

Margaret Pysarchyk

•WHEN YOU AND YOUR CHILD COME TO CHURCH

This is an excellent time to teach your child many of the important facts and beliefs about our Faith.

What are the special names for the Sunday before Great Lent?

The Sunday before Great Lent is known as Cheesefare or Forgiveness Sunday.

The name **Cheesefare** tells us that this is the last day to eat butter, milk, eggs and cheese, if we are keeping the strict fast for the period of Great Lent.

The name **Forgiveness Sunday** comes from the Gospel which is read, it speaks of forgiveness:

"For if you forgive men their trespasses, your heavenly Father will forgive you: but if you forgive not men their trespasses, neither will your Father forgive your trespasses." (Matthew 6:14-15)

Light-colored vestments are put away and replaced with somber colored ones. Church music is different; the joyful tones are replaced with the minor tones which are used throughout Lent. All of this emphasizes that we are in a period of waiting and anticipation during which we walk with our Savior in His and our journey to Calvary.

You may not attend Vespers on Forgiveness Saturday (March 2), but you can ask each member of your household for forgiveness, so that you can start your personal pilgrimage toward the Resurrection in a sin-free atmosphere.

You should plan a personal program of prayer, scripture reading, alms-giving and fasting to encourage Christian self-growth during the Lenten period.

•Your Faith can best be communicated to your children by you.

Fr. Elias Mitchell

Whatever

When you approach the chalice, what do you think about?

We can choose either to become mired in the mistakes of the past or to move forward in faith and joy. Decide today to forget that mistake, bad decision, or memory of an unfortunate event. Ask God (and others, if necessary) for forgiveness. Forgive yourself and receive the freedom that accompanies God's grace.

Every time you pray, if your prayer is sincere, there will be a new feeling and new meaning in it which will give you fresh courage, and you will understand that prayer is an education.

Dostoevsky

The practice of prayer, fasting, and almsgiving is derived from the Bible.

The reason that the Divine Liturgy is longer on the Sundays of Great Lent is that the Liturgy of St. Basil is served instead of that of St. John Chrysostom. Although they follow the same form, the prayers of the priest are longer and the responses are solemn and slower. The music is usually sung in the minor key instead of in the major key.

Add the Penitential Psalms to your daily prayers. Found in the Old Testament they are: 6, 31, 37, 50, 101, 129, 142. These are also good to read prior to Holy Confession.

The difference between fasting and abstinence is: fasting means the <u>quantity</u> (amount) of food consumed, abstinence means the <u>quality</u> or type.

St. Tikhon of Zadonskk was one of 1000 students who entered the seminary in Novgorod in 1733. Among the staff were two teachers of Latin. He spent 14 years here as a student and then five more years as a tutor and prefect. His name at this time was Timothy Sokolovsky.

The Church gives us specific names of people who went to heaven (i.e. canonized saints) but she has not specifically said who is in hell. It refers us to Scripture (Mt 18:8-9; 25:41; 2 Thes 1:8-9) and to its teachings.



EDITORS' NOTES

We hear the honking of the geese as they fly overhead, going north for the summer. Although there is snow lying in clumps, we look for green tips of the daffodils and snow drops. Spring will soon be here and it is time to plan for Great Lent and then the "Great Day" – the Resurrection of Our Lord. We prepare for Lent as for a journey or trip. We finish all the meat in the freezer, we put our books – The Lenten Triodon, the Service of Canon of St. Andrew, the Service of the Presanctified Liturgy, among others, and make a selection of a book for our Lenten reading and meditation. Matushka also pulls out her file of traditional family recipe Lenten favorites.

We get into a slower gear following the teaching of the mystics, who have always praised prayer, meditation and moments of silence, doing nothing, to strenghten our souls. We need solitude, even though in some lives it is hard to find a "quiet place." Holy Fathers have always wandered alone in the desert or in the mountains or the endless forests of Russia, seeking solitude in quiet and then returning much wiser. When we immerse ourselves in stillness, we feel its strength. Be still and without thought. This is not easy, but try. Let go of your concerns and plans, if only for a few minutes, cease to be who you are, empty yourself, and you will be filled with the knowledge of the pure wisdom – peace. We will return to our work a little stronger than we have left it. We have slowed down and can now fill our time with prayer and meditation.

As we write these notes, Kmart has gone into bankruptcy. Many reasons have been given for their problem, but one which seems to rise above all else is that the service they offer to their customers has been poor. Wal-Mart, their competitor, has greeters and it is easy to find a salesperson for service. We may not want to face the fact that people look for service in a parish, but they do. They may be fortunate to have several Orthodox Churches in their area and they will attend services in one than another. If they don't get service they will go to a non-Orthodox Church. We don't know when the change from giving to the church to getting occurred, but it has and we must deal with this. Is your parish people friendly? Is it full of cliques which snub newcomers? Do people get something for what they are expected to give? Hard questions, but they must be faced.

May you have a spiritually fruitful Great Lent.

The Stroyens

PRESS FUND

With our last bill from the printer, we received a notice that our printing bill will be 10% higher. The post office has been sneaking up with rate costs also. We want you to know that we appreciate your help in meeting these costs. Spasebo/Thank you.

John A. Spack Family, Fr. Basil Micek, Anonymous, John Edward Dallas, Fr. Joseph Hotrovich, Alexandria Bosko, Patricia Pavelchak, Irene Allen, Mary Kochmaruk, Dcn. Edward and Alice Reta, John Komision, Helen Lesko, Dcn. Stephen Rydgig, Catherine Shaffchick, Johanna Wagner, Joseph and Helen Zak, Helen Durniak, Julia Sobarnia, Olga Kovalenko, Michael and Millie Vovos, Eugene Danko, Mark Svereika, Ellen Motoviloff Miller, Tom Swift, Anna Dorozynski, Gloria Wheeler, Ethel Watlock.

Christmas Greetings John Glagola and Family.

Congratulations on our 50th John Glagola.

In memory of Job. Rita Wrobel in memory of parents John and Anna Kolesiak, brother Tom and Frank Wrobel. Walter and Julie George in memory of her brother Michael Gulick who died on Feb. 13, 1991, and his wife, Antoinette, who died on the same date seven years later (Feb. 13, 1998).

A MISTAKE?

Biblical scholars do not know why Psalms 14 and 53 are virtually identical. Some think it goes back to the time when Bibles were copied by hand, and an ancient scribe simply wrote it twice. Others believe it wasn't an error but rather was intended as a "refrain" to be read aloud by a congregation.



The people from the Carpathian area serve this soup often during Great Lent. We start our Lent with it. It is one of the "home" recipes for which there is no exact recipe. Add more beans or cabbage as desired.

SAUERKRAUT SOUP
(Carpathian Style)

1 large can or bag of sauerkraut
1/2 head cabbage
2 large onions
2-3 cloves garlic
1 can red kidney beans, undrained
pepper, dill to taste
3 Tbls. flour
3 Tbls. oil

Drain sauerkraut, saving juice. Rinse sauerkraut if very sour. Place in large soup pot. Slice cabbage fine. Add. Add finely cut onions and garlic. Cover with water. Simmer for an hour. Add more water if too thick. Add undrained red beans, pepper and dill, if using. Simmer 15 more minutes. Make saprazhka, browning flour in oil over medium heat. Stir constantly. Add some of soup liquid. Cook until thick. Add to soup. Add water as needed. Taste. Add some of the reserved sauerkraut juice to taste.

Optional:
1. Omit cabbage and/or dill.
2. Use more beans, if desired.
3. Use more or less garlic.

WERE THEY LOST?

The Bible refers to a number of books which no longer exist: "Is not this written in the book of Jasher?" (Joshua 10:13) and "It is written in the book of Jasher" (2 Samuel 1:18). Also "it is said in the book of the Wars of the Lord" (Numbers 21:14) and "written in the book of Shemaiah the Prophet" (2 Chronicles 12:15). There are other examples.

Some scholars believe that these books were never a part of the Bible but were writings by contemporary figures.

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WINTER'S GRACE

We may well wonder why the gospel readings mention sheep so often. This month we again hear about sheep in Matthew 25:31-46.

How does a sheep get lost? Certainly not by design. It gets lost from the flock and the shepherd by doing what is quite natural and right for a sheep. It gets lost not by doing something wrong or bad but by doing something quite normal. It needs food, and to get it it turns here and there where the grass seems to be greenest and most abundant. So, busy about this normal pursuit, it looks up after awhile and finds that the flock and shepherds are nowhere to be seen.

This applies to humans. Often deliberate disobedience occurs and, tragic as its results are, it is doubtful whether most of our trouble and unhappiness is due to such plain orneriness.

More often our spiritual insensitivity, with the resultant lack of peace and joy which results, are due to the crowding of life with good but second rate things. We all have become too preoccupied, too busy. We let our spiritual life lapse. Like the sheep, we get lost from our parish community and our shepherd. Great Lent should give us the realization that we need to find our spiritual flock and values.

ON READING THE BIBLE

St. Seraphim Sarov says: "One should nourish the soul with the Word of God: for the Word of God as St. Gregory the Theologian says, is angelic bread, by which are nourished the souls that hunger for God. Most of all one should occupy oneself with reading the New Testament and the Psalms. One should stand when reading these.

Home Bible Reading Schedule

MARCH 2002

1	Mark 14:3-9	15	Zach 8:19-23
2	Luke 20:46-21:4	16	Matt 6:1-13
3	**Luke 15:11-32**	**17**	**Matt 6:14-21**
4	Mark 11:1-11	18	Proverbs 1:1-20
5	Mark 14:10-42	19	Proverbs 1:20-33
6	Mark 14:43-15:1	20	Proverbs 2:1-22
7	Mark 15:1-15	21	Proverbs 3:1-18
8	Mark 15:22-25, 33-41	22	Proverbs 3:19-34
		23	Mark 2:23-3:5
9	Luke 21:8-9, 25-27, 33-36	**24**	**John 1:43-51**
		25	Proverbs 3:34-4:22
10	**Matt 25:31-46**		
11	Luke 19:29-40, 22:7-9	26	Proverbs 5:1-15
		27	Proverbs 5:15-6:4
12	Luke 22:39-42, 45:23-24	28	Proverbs 6:3-20
		29	Proverbs 6:20-7:1
13	Joel 3:12-21	30	Mark 1:35-44
14	Luke 2[illegible]44-46	**31**	**Mark 2:1-12**

[illegible]LE STUDY

St. Bas[illegible]Great writes: "The Lord does not desire the death of a sinner, but rather that he should change and live. There is a time of long suffering, a time of correction. Have you stumbled? Arise. Have you sinned? Cease. Do not stand in the way of sinners, but spring away."

Last Sunday in Luke 15:11-32, the Church showed us the goodness of our Heavenly Father. Today with Matt 25:31-46, it reminds us of the inevitable consequences of sin. Sin robs us of our rest, our peace and joy in the Father's mansion. Sin pushes us into the darkness of sorrow and despair – into the lake of fire which does not cleanse but destroys us. Let us flee from sin! What does sin consist of? It consists of a heart and mind which is far from God. In such a state it is easy for us to lie, to slander, to welcome ideas about anger and revenge, to use other people for our own benefit and their hurt. When we are not focused on God, it is not hard for us to see suffering people without the slightest urge to understand or help them in any way. Then prayer and worship also appear to us to be too boring and difficult to bother with when we could instead be amusing ourselves, sleeping or doing something which seems to have a higher priority. Those who hear these words have already been touched by the Lord. They have come to God's temple to worship – or they have at least thought about it. This is already the way home to the Father! Every good and virtuous thought and desire puts us on this road! How good He is to show us so many ways to escape from that lake of fire, from the consequences of our sins and those of others. But let us keep on doing it – until we finally reach His heavenly Mansion to stay forever.

Fr. Kutash, Ph.D.

FUNDS

Hundreds of copies of **The Orthodox Herald** go to Alaska each month. We also do mission work with your help sending copies to Service people, prisoners, and foreign places. Thank you for your help in these efforts.

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